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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [SO](#) [VT](#) [KE](#)
SUBJECT: VATICAN SUPPORTIVE ON SOMALIA

REF: A) 04 VATICAN 174 ET AL.; B) NAIROBI 2525; C) STATE 93874

CLASSIFIED BY: Peter Martin, Pol/Econ Chief, Vatican, State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Holy See Country Director for Somalia Monsignor Lucio Sembrano voiced support for U.S and international community efforts on that country during a June 13 meeting. Sembrano, who has engaged with us on Somalia in the past (ref a), had asked us for an update on the situation. We outlined appropriate material in refs (b) and (c), in particular regarding the formation of the international contact group on Somalia.

¶2. (C) Sembrano agreed with publicly stated U.S. assessments of key issues (e.g., Somalia's importance in the war on terror, and the USG perspective on the Islamic courts in Somalia). He also mused that those who were now questioning past support for Somali warlords would have been hard pressed to come up with better alternatives. "Who else was there [to support] besides the religious extremists?" he asked. Sembrano asked that we keep him up-to-date on important developments and also noted the interest of the apostolic nuncio in Nairobi, Archbishop Alain Paul Lebeaupin, whom he praised as a particularly effective diplomat. The nuncio for Somalia (resident in Addis Ababa) seems less involved.

SANDROLINI